

**Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, January 23,
1799, from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve
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Leicester Ford.**

TO JAMES MONROE J. MSS.

Jan 23, 99.

Dear Sir. —The newspapers furnish you with the articles of common news as well as the Congressional. You observe the addition proposed to be made to our navy, and the loan of 5. millions, opened at 8. percent., to equip it The papers say that our agents abroad are purchasing vessels for this purpose. The following is as accurate a statement of our income & expence *annual*, as I can form, after divesting the treasury reports of such articles as are incidentals & properly *annual*:

D. C.

1798—Imposts 7,405,420 86.

Excise, Auctions, Licences, Carriages 585,879 67.

Postage 57,000

Patents 1,050

Coinage 10,242

dividends of bank stock 79,920

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fines 8

8,139,520 53.

1799—Direct Tax, Stamp Tax, Clear of expense 2,000,000

10,139,520 53

Int & reimbursmt of domestic debt 2,987,145 48

Int on domestic loans 238,637 50

Dutch debt 586,829 58 3,812,612 56

Carried forward 3,812,612 56

Brought forward 3,812,612 56

Civil list 524,206 83

loan offices 13,000

Mint 13,3000

light-houses 44,281 08

annuities and Grants 1,603 33

military Pensions 93,400

miscellaneous expences 19,000

Contingent expences of Govmt 20,000

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amt of civil government properly 728,791 24

Indians 110,000

Foreign intercourse 93,000

Treaties with Gr Br, Spain & Meditern. 187,500 280,500

annual expense of existing navy 2,434,261 10

Do. of Army (5,038 offic & priv) 1,461,175

Do. Of Officers of additl Army (actually commd) 217,375 4,112,811 10

9,044,714 90

Do. of privates of do. (about 9000) 2,523,455

Do. of additional Navy (exclus. outfit) 2,949,278 96 5,472,733 96

8 pr ct. int on 5. millions new loan 400,000

14,917,448 86

By this you will perceive that our income for 1799, being 10. millions, and expences 9. millions, we have a surplus of 1. million, which, with the 5. millions to be borrowed, it is expected, will build the navy & raise the army. When they are complete, we shall have to raise by new taxes about 5. millions more, making in the whole 15. millions, which if our population be 5. millions, will be 3. dollars a head. But these additional taxes will not be wanting, till the session after next. The majority in Congress being as in the last session matters will go on now as then. I shall send you Gerry's correspondence and Pickering's report on it, by which you will perceive the unwillingness of France to break with us, and

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our determination not to believe it, & therefore to go to war with them. For in this light must be viewed our surrounding their islands with our armed vessels instead of their cruising on our coasts as the law directs.

According to information, there is real reason to believe that the X. Y. Z. delusion is wearing off, and the public mind beginning to take the same direction it was getting into before that manœuvre. Gerry's dispatches will tend strongly to open the eyes of the people. Besides this several other impressive circumstances will all be bearing on the public mind. The alien & sedition laws as before, the direct tax, the additional army & navy, an usurious loan to set those follies on foot, a prospect of heavy additional taxes as soon as they are completed, still heavier taxes if the government forces on the war, recruiting officers lounging at every court-house and decoying the laborer from his plough. A clause in a bill now under debate for opening commerce with Toussaint & his black subjects now in open rebellion against France, will be a circumstance of high aggravation to that country, and in addition to our cruising round their islands will put their patience to a great proof. One fortunate circumstance is that, annihilated as they are on the ocean, they cannot get at us for some time, and this will give room for the popular sentiment to correct the imprudence. Nothing is believed of the stories about Buonaparte. Those about Ireland have a more serious aspect. I delivered the letter from you of which I was the bearer. No use was made of the paper, because that poor creature had already fallen too low even for contempt. It seems that the representative of our district is attached to his seat. Mr. Beckley tells me you have the collection of a sum of money for him, which is destined for me. What is the prospect of getting it, & how much? I do not know whether I have before informed you that Mr. Madison paid to Mr. Barnes 240. or 250. D in your name to be placed to your credit with Mr. Short, I consequently squared that account, & debited you to myself for the balance. This with another article or two of account between us, stands therefore against the books for which I am indebted to you, & of which I know not the cost. A very important measure is under contemplation here, which, if adopted, will require a considerable sum of money *on loan*. The thing being beyond the abilities of those

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present, they will possibly be obliged to assess their friends also. I may perhaps be forced to score you for 50. or 100. D, to be paid at convenience, but as yet it is only talked of. I shall rest my justification on the importance of the measure, and the sentiments I know you entertain on such subjects. We consider the elections on the whole as rather in our favor, & particularly believe those of N Caroline will immediately come right. J. Nicholas & Brent, both offer again. My friendly respects to mrs. Monroe, & to yourself affectionate salutations & adieu.

P.S. I shall seldom write to you, on account of the strong suspicions of infidelity in the post offices. Always examine the seal before you open my letters, & note whether the impression is distinct.